

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 160

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 130

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 160—Relative to Kwanzaa.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 18, 2012.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 160, Carter. Kwanzaa.

This measure would recognize the 45th anniversary of Kwanzaa and proclaim December 26 through January 1 each year as Kwanzaa Week.

WHEREAS, Kwanzaa is an African American and Pan-African holiday which celebrates family, community, and culture and is observed each year by millions throughout the world African community on every continent in the world; and

WHEREAS, Kwanzaa was created in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga, an internationally recognized scholar and author, professor and chair of Africana Studies at California State University, Long Beach, and founder and executive director of the African American Cultural Center, in order to reaffirm African Americans' rootedness in African culture, to provide a context in which Africans around the world could come together and reinforce the bonds between them and to introduce the Nguzo Saba, and reaffirm the importance of African communitarian values which stress and strengthen family, community, and culture; and

WHEREAS, Kwanzaa is a cultural holiday, not a religious holiday, and is thus open to and practiced by Africans of all religious faiths from December 26 to January 1 each year; and

WHEREAS, Kwanzaa is a profound expression of African people's commitment to their cultural values and heritage, an annual reaffirmation and reinforcement of the bonds between them as a people and a celebration of themselves and their history; and

WHEREAS, The Kwanzaa celebration, with its emphasis on history, values, family, community, and culture, speaks to African people throughout the world in a special way; and

WHEREAS, The name Kwanzaa is derived from the phrase "matunda ya kwanza," which means "first fruits" in Swahili, a Pan-African language that is the most widely spoken African language; and

WHEREAS, First-fruits celebrations are recorded in African history as early as ancient Egypt and Nubia; and

WHEREAS, Kwanzaa was created in order to introduce and cultivate an appreciation for the Nguzo Saba, the Seven Principles, which are:

(a) Umoja (unity): to strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race.

(b) Kujichagulia (self-determination): to define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves, and speak for ourselves.

(c) Ujima (collective work and responsibility): to build and maintain our community together and make our brother's and sister's problems our problems and to solve them together.

(d) Ujamaa (cooperative economics): to build and maintain our own stores, shops, and other businesses and to profit from them together.

(e) Nia (purpose): to make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.

(f) Kuumba (creativity): to do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.

(g) Imani (faith): to believe with all our heart in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders, and the righteousness and victory of our struggle; and

WHEREAS, The Kwanzaa celebration is:

(a) A time of ingathering for people to reaffirm the bonds between them.

(b) A time of special reverence for the creator and creation in thanks for the blessings, bountifulness, and beauty of creation.

(c) A time for commemorating the past in pursuit of its lessons and in honor of our ancestors.

(d) A time for recommitment to our highest cultural ideals and our effort to bring forth the best in African cultural thought and practice.

(e) A time for celebrating the good, including the goodness of life, existence, family, community, and culture, as well as the good of the awesome and the ordinary, in a word the good of the divine, natural, and social; and

WHEREAS, It is important to commemorate Kwanzaa as a celebration that strengthens the sense of rootedness in the best of African culture, thereby strengthening the bonds of community and allowing for a reaffirmation of a common identity; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature commemorates the 45th anniversary of the celebration of Kwanzaa; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature proclaims and designates December 26 through January 1 each year as "Kwanzaa Week" in recognition and respect of the cultural significance of this holiday to African people throughout the world; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.